



In re Appln. of FURUMOTO et al.
Application No. 09/729,088

REMARKS

In response to the Official Action mailed June 4, 2003, and the interview conducted with the Examiner on October 15, 2003, Applicants amend their application and request reconsideration. In this Amendment, no claims are added or canceled so that claims 1-5 remain pending. No new matter has been added.

The Examiner is requested to approve the accompanying replacement drawings. Figures 5, 8, and 9 are amended. Steps 32 and 72 of Figures 5 and 8, respectively, are amended to replace the commas with periods. Figure 9 is amended to include an affirmative output and to correct an error regarding step S105.

During the interview of October 15, 2003, the Examiner and Applicants' representatives discussed claim 1. Applicants disagreed with the Examiner's interpretation of Li et al. (U.S. Pat. No. 5,974,245, hereinafter Li), namely that movement of delay gates in Li constituted deletion of delay gates as recited in claim 1. Applicants' representatives suggested that language be added to claim 1 to recite that in deleting delay gates, the total number of delay gates in the circuit is reduced. The Examiner indicated that such an amendment would clarify the claim and thus defeat the rejection based on Li. The Examiner and Applicants' representatives also agreed that the last limitation of claim 1 should be deleted to avoid a potential rejection as to clarity that had not yet been raised.

Accordingly, claim 1 is amended to recite that skew is manually adjusted between clock trees *by reducing total number of the delay gates in the circuit placement, from the plurality of delay gates inserted, by deleting delay gates from the delay gates inserted*. Also, the last limitation of examined claim 1 is deleted.

The Official Action objected to Figures 5, 8, and 9. Pursuant to the Examiner's objection, proposed corrected Figures 5, 8, and 9 are included with this Amendment.

The Official Action rejected claims 1-5 as unpatentable over Li. That rejection is respectfully traversed.

Li fails to teach or suggest inserting delay gates into a circuit, placing and routing the circuit, and then reducing the total number of delay gates in the circuit by deleting delay gates, as recited by amended claim 1. Thus, amended claim 1 is patentable over Li, and the rejection should be withdrawn.

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Accordingly, the application is in form for allowance. Withdrawal of the rejection and prompt allowance of the application are earnestly solicited. Applicants note that the statutory period for reply to the Official Action expires December 4, 2003. Thus, if a response to this Amendment is not received by December 4, 2003, a Notice of Appeal and 3-month extension of time fee will be filed.

Respectfully submitted,



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Amendment or ROA - Final (Rev. 9/3/03)